



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
GEORGE P. BUSH, COMMISSIONER

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PRESS RELEASE

U.S. Coast Guard and Texas GLO re-float large vessel damaged by Harvey

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AUSTIN — The fishing vessel "R&R" is floating once again after spending a month at the bottom of Conn Brown Harbor in Aransas Pass, Texas, after being damaged by Hurricane Harvey. The 65-foot, 94-ton shrimp boat was refloated on Oct. 6, 2017, after seven days of work overseen by the Coast Guard and the Texas General Land Office (GLO). Approximately 6,000 gallons of diesel fuel and other pollutants were removed before de-watering the vessel.

"We are committed to working with and supporting the state of Texas to safely remove the oil and hazardous substance pollution threats from the maritime environment," said Commander Tedd Hutley, incident commander of the Hurricane Harvey ESF-10 response. "Our goal is to protect people and the environment and help impacted communities get back to normal."

The sunken vessels "R&R" and "Dragon's Den" were identified as a priority by the GLO due to the risk to the environment and maritime traffic. The boats are two of nearly 200 boats, both commercial and recreational, that are targeted for removal as part of the GLO's vessel removal program.

"At the GLO, our greatest priority is helping our fellow Texans recover from Hurricane Harvey," said Commissioner George P. Bush. "Removing displaced and sunken vessels from our coastal waterways helps restore our coastal waters and keep folks safe."

Helping owners find and identify their boats is also an important step toward recovery. Work like this will be an important part of the story of this disaster and our subsequent recovery."

Dive teams cut away the tangled masts and riggings of the two vessels on the seafloor before any work could be done, suggesting strong thrashing occurred between the vessels before sinking said Kerry Walsh, project manager with contracted company Global Diving and Salvage. When the storm hit the boats were tied up side-by-side at the dock and ultimately broke away from the concrete sea wall when the cleats broke from the strong hurricane winds.

"I think they just sunk themselves," said Walsh. "Together and tangled up, they put themselves in a predicament and down-flooded. Right now, after pumping out the "R&R", she's floating and whatever damage that occurred was topside."

The Hurricane Harvey Emergency Support Function (ESF)-10 Unified Command is a partnership between the Coast Guard and the GLO. The Unified Command is directing and managing pollution response activities across coastal Texas impacted by Hurricane Harvey.

For more information, please call the GLO's Vessel Owner Hotline 877-458-9377 or visit <http://www.glo.texas.gov/coast/coastal-management/harvey/vessels/index.html>.

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